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Dear Kimberly Topper,
Subject: Anesthetic and Life Support Drugs Advisory Committee
I have been a professional pilot most of my adult life; first in service to my country, and then as an airline pilot. This fulfilled my childhood dream of being a captain for a major airline. Unfortunately, my dream became a nightmare when degenerative disc disease prevented me from sitting comfortably for more than a few minutes at a time. My problem became so acute that I am now unable to drive an automobile, so flying an aircraft is totally out of the question. I endured numerous procedures and three major surgeries over a ten year period. I now have a five-level fusion in my lumbar region and suffer from "failed-back syndrome". I am in constant, intractable, horrible pain. Well, as you can only imagine, I don't have much of a life. What life I do have I can attribute only to the medications (oxycontin, zonegran, and elavil) my doctor is able to supply. Should those medications be taken away, the cold, hard reality of my situation leaves little in the way of options. I know that there are thousands of others in my condition or worse. This medication is all that keeps us going from day to day. Without it we have no life, period. In our justice system we say that it is better that 100 guilty people go free than for 1 innocent person to go to jail for something they didn't do. Taking away my medication would be nothing short of a death sentence. Please, do the right thing. Take the drugs away from those who abuse this privilege on a case by case basis. Don't make sweeping changes in the "name of progress" that affect people like me. Realize the devastating consequences of the changes being proposed and the affect it will have on others.

Respectfully yours,
Gary L. Bradford
Captain – Medically Retired
American Airlines

cc: Robert F. Reder, MD
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